



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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Shrimp Fishery to Re-Open Off Texas on July 15, 2012

NOAA Fisheries Service announces federal waters from 9 to 200 nautical miles off Texas will open to shrimp trawling at 30 minutes after official sunset, local time, on **July 15, 2012**, corresponding to the time Texas opens its waters to shrimp trawling.

The shrimp fishery is closed annually off Texas to allow brown shrimp to reach a larger and more valuable size prior to harvest, and to prevent waste of brown shrimp that might otherwise be discarded because of their small size.

The opening dates of the Texas closure are based on the results of biological sampling by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). NOAA Fisheries Service opens federal waters off Texas when the state of Texas opens its territorial waters. Texas opens state waters based on projections of the average size of brown shrimp leaving the estuaries is 112 mm total length, during a period of maximum duration ebb tides. TPWD has projected the criteria to end the Texas closure will be met on July 15 this year.

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All shrimp vessels should be aware of two seismic surveys that will be conducted in the Galveston area during July.

1) During July 15-31, 2012, the *MV Iron Cat* will be conducting a reflection seismic survey offshore southern Galveston Island. The survey will be conducted less than 10 miles offshore in the San Luis Pass area contained by the following 4 coordinates:

Latitude (N)	Longitude (W)
29.1028	95.0236
29.0049	95.1622
28.9113	95.0766
29.0155	94.9439

The survey will tow an airgun and streamer array, but will not deploy seafloor cables. Operations will be conducted continuously for the dates indicated. Additional information regarding the survey, including a map of the survey area, can be obtained by contacting: Tip Meckel, Texas Bureau of Economic Geology, 512-471-4306.

2) Samson Exploration, LLC is conducting seismic survey operations from the Bolivar Peninsula (coordinates 29.362226 N. lat.; 94.778968 W. long.), finishing approximately 7.5 miles east of High Island (coordinates 29.59234 N. lat.; 94.24857 W. long). The survey will deploy receivers at 220-foot intervals along parallel receiver lines spaced 1,760 feet apart, in a north to south direction. As many as eight cables will be deployed approximately 1,000 feet from shore, extending approximately 4 miles offshore. Receivers and batteries may extend to 1 foot above the seafloor. The vessel conducting this operation is the *MV Ms. Grace*. An airgun will be towed approximately 20 feet behind the boat. Operations are currently ongoing moving west to east from the western tip of Bolivar Peninsula. Please contact 409-223-9359 if there are any questions or further information regarding Samson's project.